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**ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING
AUSTRALIAN PLANTS**

MELALEUCA AND ALLIED GENERA STUDY GROUP
ABN 56 654 053 676

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NEWSLETTER NO. 24 June 2002

Dear Members,

As I write this (the last week in May) the Melaleuca viridiflora trees around the area are in full flower and creating a very good display. We have three of them in our garden - one is a dark pink, one is a fairly dark red and the other is a weeping burgundy form. The red form appears to be the most popular in gardens. Most plants of M. viridiflora maintain a good shape and remain fairly dense without the need for trimming . Without pruning most plants retain foliage almost to ground level and so provide quite a good screen . The weeping burgundy form is slightly different in that it grows a bit taller with a more open habit of growth but it still retains quite good shape . These plants start to flower about the end of April to mid-May and will now flower on until about the end of July or early August , often with 3 or 4 flushes of flowers during that time . We had a long , hot summer with rainfall well below average with the result that water bills are higher than they would normally be for this time of the year. The warm weather continued until a week or so ago with the result that some of the Callistemons have been tricked into thinking spring is here and have produced a few flowers . Some of the ones which flowered are - C. pearsonii, C. "Adina " , C. viminalis, C. comboyensis and some of the forms of C. citrinus and C. salignus .

We purchased one of the Leptospermum " Aussie Blossom " series (" Martin ") last year which has grown very well to its present height of about 0.75 metres . It has been in flower for the past 4 weeks and is still producing quite a few buds so it should continue to flower for some time to come . I have tried to purchase the other two in the series - " Joy " and " Naioko " but they don't seem to be available at present . They may turn up again later in the year . All three forms need a light trim occasionally to maintain their shape.

M. quinquenervia and the two forms of M. leucadendra (narrow-leaved and broad-leaved) are flowering quite well at present . Both of these species have been used quite extensively in car-parks, parks and in median strip plantings where they have been very

successful as they don't require extensive pruning, provide good shade and don't appear to be subject to attack by pests and diseases. They provide copious quantities of nectar for nectar – feeding birds and insects.

Neofabricia myrtifolia has just finished a heavy flush of flowering. It is early this year as it usually flowers about late August. Our plant is some 2.5 metres high. It flowers well each year and creates a good display with its bright yellow flowers. *N. myrtifolia* is adaptable to a wide range of soil types and it generally maintains a good shape. It is long-lived as our plant is now 21 years old.

Australian Cultivar Registration Authority

It was decided at the ASGAP Biennial Conference AGM in Canberra in Sept 2001 that study group leaders should advise members of the close association the society has with the ACRA. ASGAP is the major financial supporter of ACRA, in return for which ACRA provides free registration of all native cultivars for members of the society (normally \$50.00). These need to be registered through either a local or state group or through a study group

However, it must be pointed out that the \$ 50.00 pays for the Registrar of ACRA to write a full description of the new cultivar, listing exactly how it differs from any similar species or cultivars.

Therefore, any free registrations through ASGAP must be accompanied by a full description by the applicant. If the applicant is not in a position to carry out this description, he/she should seek the assistance of the leader of the appropriate study group or one of its members.

Unfortunately, ACRA is seriously underfunded, and can no longer accept free registrations from ASGAP members without the full plant description. Therefore, any member who wishes to register a new plant should contact the appropriate study group leader or Neil Marriot, P.O. Box 107, Stawell, Vic, 3380 who represents ASGAP on the ACRA board.

Vale - Derrick Arnall

The death occurred, in November 2001, of Derrick Arnall in his 85th year at a retirement home in Limbe, Malawi where he has lived for the past 2 years following 30 years on his coffee and citrus plantation at Chowe in the Namizimu Forest overlooking Lake Malawi which he still owned and visited from time to time over the past 2 years. The property is at an altitude of some 1000 metres and is on a similar latitude to that of Cairns in Qld. Derrick joined the Callistemon Study Group in 1983 when it was under the leadership of Harry Infield. He had a keen interest in Australian plants and had an extensive collection of plants from many genera among which Callistemon and

Melaleuca figured prominently . Two of his regrets were that he was unable to grow many of the spectacular plants from the south-west of Western Australia and that he was not able to visit Australia to see our plants in their natural habitat. Callistemon “ Malawi Giant “, a form of Callistemon viminalis, originated on Derrick’s property . Although he forwarded seed of this to Australia the seedlings didn’t reach the grandeur of the original. If it had been possible to obtain cutting material from the original plant it may have been a different story but long delays in the postal service from Malawi prevented this from eventuating . He will be missed as a member of this group.

Members reports

Paul Kennedy has forwarded another detailed report on some of the plants he is growing – this time Melaleuca species . Paul has tagged his plants with tags made from 20 mm long by 1 mm thick aluminium strips with the name engraved on these with an electric engraver . The tags are attached to the plants with a large loop of soft wire . The Melaleucas have not suffered from any disease problems but hares and rabbits have taken some toll of the plants . A barrier of used car tyres is now used to protect plants from these pests. To date, the best flowering Melaleucas have been – wilsonii, cordata, hypericifolia and “ Georgiana Molloy “ which are eye-catching because of their bright flowers . Many of the white and cream flowered species have not flowered as well as shown in photographs , possibly because of the drier conditions to which they are subjected. Paul advised in his letter (Feb 2002) that he had seedlings of Callistemon pauciflora (a red flowered Callistemon which grows in the southern part of the Northern Territory and the only Callistemon growing naturally in the Northern Territory) available to any member who wanted them . I don’t know if these are still available but , should you be interested , please write to Paul at “ Lot 1, Johnsons Lane, Strathmerton, Vic, 3541 “ or phone him at (03) 58745239.

The Melaleuca species and cultivars Paul has in his garden and the various soil types in which they are growing are as follows :

Clay - armillaris, blaerifolia, bracteata, brevifolia, decussata, diosmafolia, ericifolia, gibbosa, halmaturorum, hamulosa, huegelii, hypericifolia, lanceolata, laterita, linariifolia , nodosa, parvistaminea, quinquenervia, squarrosa, subfalcata, teretifolia, wilsonii, “ Georgiana Molloy “ , alternifolia, stypheloides, pulchella.

Sand over clay - calycina, citrina, glabberima, macronychia, megacephala, microphylla, steedmanii.

Sandy loam - coccinea, conothamnoides, cordata, pentagona var. latifolia (previously known as “ israelitensis “), nematophylla, pungens, spathulata, suberosa, thyoides, viminea, vioplacea,

Sand - elliptica, laxiflora, ryeae, holosericea, spicigera, uncinata, glomerata

Loam - manglesii, radula, scabra, leucadendra

Clay loam - fulgens, densa

Sand to sandy loam - incana

Loamy clay - neglecta

Lorraine Haig from Richmond in Tasmania has responded to the article in NL 23 re mulch. Lorraine has access to pea straw and finds it to be a very satisfactory mulch . It is applied thickly in spring and few weeds come through it although a few peas appear from time to time . Due to the coarseness of the material water penetrates readily and it also greatly reduces evaporation losses. The downside to this mulch is that blackbirds love to scratch in it and tend to pull it away from plants and expose root systems . It is necessary to use netting to protect young plants and the mulch but Lorraine considers this a small price to pay for the benefits gained . Lorraine's letter arrived in Jan 2002 and , at that time, the following plants which had been raised from seed some 12 months earlier were in flower or had flowered - *Melaleuca megacephala*, *M. elliptica*, *M. thymifolia*, *M. pulchella* and *Regelia inops*. A good result for plants grown from seed.

Liesbeth Uijtewaal from Holland continues to forward her interesting letters. In one of her recent letters she told me she was in the process of putting together a detailed list of the Australian plants she has growing -- 330 plus and most of them in containers . Liesbeth sent me some photos of the flowers on her *Leptospermum macrocarpum* x *spectabile* - a very nice dark red and 35 mm in diameter. Other plants which have flowered recently are - *Kunzea ambigua*, *Callistemon pinifolius* (red), *Calothamnus quadrifidus* , *Callistemon glaucus*, *Leptospermum rupestre* appears to be coming into bud, *Melaleuca steedmanii*, *Melaleuca radula*, *Leptospermum rotundifolium*, *Kunzea parvifolia*, *Callistemon citrinus*, as well as species from many other genera. Most of Liesbeth's plants are kept outdoors during summer but shifted into hot houses during winter. Sounds like a fairly major chore .

Melaleuca nematophylla and filifolia

An article prepared by Ivan Holliday and first published in S.A. Region Journal is attached herewith with the permission of the author.

The genus Hypocalymma

Hypocalymma are part of the Myrtaceae family of plants in the Chamelaucium Alliance which also includes *Astartea*, *Calytrix*, *Homalocalyx*, *Thryptomene*, *Micromyrtus* etc . There are 13 species in the genera , all of which are endemic to south-west Western Australia. All species in the genus are small woody shrubs which produce a profusion of flowers in leaf axils on erect stems with colours ranging from white to pink (light and dark shades) to yellow . Their natural habitat varies from wet , swampy country (*H. cordifolium*) to well-drained situations but, in cultivation, it seems all

species must have good drainage to survive. *H. robustum* and *H. augustifolium* were introduced into cultivation in England in 1843 under the names of Swan River Myrtle and White Myrtle as the flowers resemble those of the European Myrtles.

Brief details of some of the species in the genus are :

Hypocalymma robustum - grows to about 1.5 metres with an erect habit and small, narrow leaves. Flowers are bright pink, clustered in leaf axils, and seen from mid-winter to late-spring. It is often used as a cut flower. This plant grows naturally in open forest so will tolerate some light shade

Hypocalymma augustifolium - grows to about 2 metres with narrow, aromatic foliage. Profuse axillary flowers on long arching branches are seen from mid-winter to early summer. In general flowers open white and age to pink but pure white and cream forms are sometimes found. This plant benefits from quite severe pruning after flowering. Full sun or light shade is preferred for optimum growth.

Hypocalymma strictum - is generally less than 1 metre in height with needle-like leaves and an upright habit. Scented, pink flowers are seen from early summer to mid-autumn. This plant prefers sandy soils with some shade and is fairly resistant to drought conditions.

Hypocalymma xanthopetalum - is, generally, a rounded shrub to a height of some 2 metres and, although it likes full sun, it will tolerate some shade. Leaves of this plant are hairy. Bright yellow flowers are seen from mid-winter to mid-spring. We grew this species in our garden for a number of years and, although it reached a height of only 0.5 metres, it flowered freely each year

Hypocalymma speciosum - produces single deep pink flowers in leaf axils in spring. It may be either a dense or spreading shrub to a height of 0.7 metres. Leaves are quite large being almost round and up to 8 mm long. It requires very good drainage and prefers semi shade

Hypocalymma cordifolium - is a rounded shrub to a height of 1 metre with heart-shaped leaves to a length of 10 mm. Young leaves and stems tend to be reddish. Fairly insignificant white flowers are seen in spring. This species grows naturally in wet situations in Jarrah forests. This is an excellent foliage plant

Should any member/s be growing plants from this genera please let me know the results you have achieved.

The genus Neofabrica

There are 3 species in this genus, also part of the Myrtaceae family, which was previously included in the genus *Leptospermum*. All species are confined to the northern part of Cape York in north Qld.

Neofabrica mjoebergii - a shrub or small tree to as height of 10 metres usually found in open forests and often on sandy soils with small leaves up to 10 mm in length. Flowers in white or cream , about 1 cm in diameter , and produced in the upper leaf axils are seen in spring.

Neofabrica myrtifolia - can be almost prostrate on coastal headlands or reach tall shrub or small tree proportions , up to 4 metres , in more protected areas . The bark is dark-coloured and very rough. New growth often has a reddish colouration and is usually hairy. Leaves are variable but usually about 40 mm in length. Yellow perfumed flowers up to 25 mm in diameter are produced during late winter and early spring . This plant has been grown in Brisbane gardens for many years and adapts to a wide range of soil conditions .

Neofabrica sericisepala - has a restricted occurrence and is confined to shallow sandy soils in open forest country , often with a pebbly or rocky surface layer. It will grow to a height of 6 metres . Leaves are often sickle shaped and are up to 30 mm long , hairy when young. 15 mm diameter yellow flowers are seen in late autumn to mid-winter

As with the genus *Hypocalymma* please advise whether or not you have any of these species growing and the results you have achieved.

Smoked Vermiculite

Some time back I acquired a sample of smoked vermiculite to try on some seeds which had proven difficult to germinate . The most outstanding success was with *Hemigenia biddulphiana* which I had not been able to germinate previously . By sprinkling a thin layer of vermiculite on top of the seed mix I obtained almost 100 % germination. I also achieved a slightly better germination rate with *Callistemon* seed by using the vermiculite than previously achieved. I eventually tracked down a supplier and purchased 1 litre of the material , in dry form, for the study group . The vermiculite is available to members at a cost of \$2.00 for 250 ml.. Should you like to try it please let me know and I will forward some to you .

Seed list

The following seed is currently out of stock:

Leptospermum continentale “ *Horizontalis* “

Leptospermum scoparium (Mt Field , Tasmania)

As noted in NL23 seed of *Callistemon shirressii* is also available. Thanks to Arthur Dench and to Allan Woollett for collecting and forwarding seed of this species to me.

Callistemon germination percentages

I have been corresponding for some time with a Agricultural Science student from Pisa University in Italy who used Callistemon as the subject for her thesis for her degree. Results of germination trials conducted by her are attached with her permission . The seed listed on sheet A were kept at a constant temperature of 25oC with water only added. The seed listed on sheet B was treated with a weak solution of potassium nitrate and also held at 25oC.

Slide sets

The Melaleuca , Callistemon and Leptospermum slide sets have been borrowed by a number of branches in various States over the past few months . These slide sets are available to groups or individuals for the cost of return registered post . The study pays the cost of outward postage.

Membership

Membership fees are due on July 1 and will remain at \$5.00 for Australian members and \$12.00 for overseas members . Verna and I leave on July 8 for an extended trip to northern and central Australia, the Kimberley region of Western Australia , South Australia and Victoria . We won't be home until about mid-September so it would be appreciated if membership fees could be forwarded to reach here before we leave . If not, I will arrange for my daughter to bank any money which comes in while we are away.

Financial statement

Receipts		Expenditure	
Balance at 11-09-01	\$766 - 91	Petty Cash	\$56 - 85
Membership fees	\$199 - 00	Photocopy NL 23	\$63 - 75
		Printer ink,	
		stationery	\$51 - 55
Total	\$ 965 - 91	Postage NL 23	\$48 - 95
		Registered postage-	
Less Expenditure	\$239 - 30	Slide sets	\$16 - 10
		GDT	\$2 - 10
Total	\$ 726 - 61		
		Total	\$239 - 30
Balance as per bank statement 11-03-02	\$ 726 - 61		

I thought you may appreciate this :

A Dutchman was explaining the red, white and blue Netherlands flag to an Australian. " Our flag is a symbol of our taxes . We get red when we talk about them, white when we get our tax bills and blue after we pay them." The Australian nodded. " It's the same in Australia only we see stars too "

Regards and good growing

Col Cornford

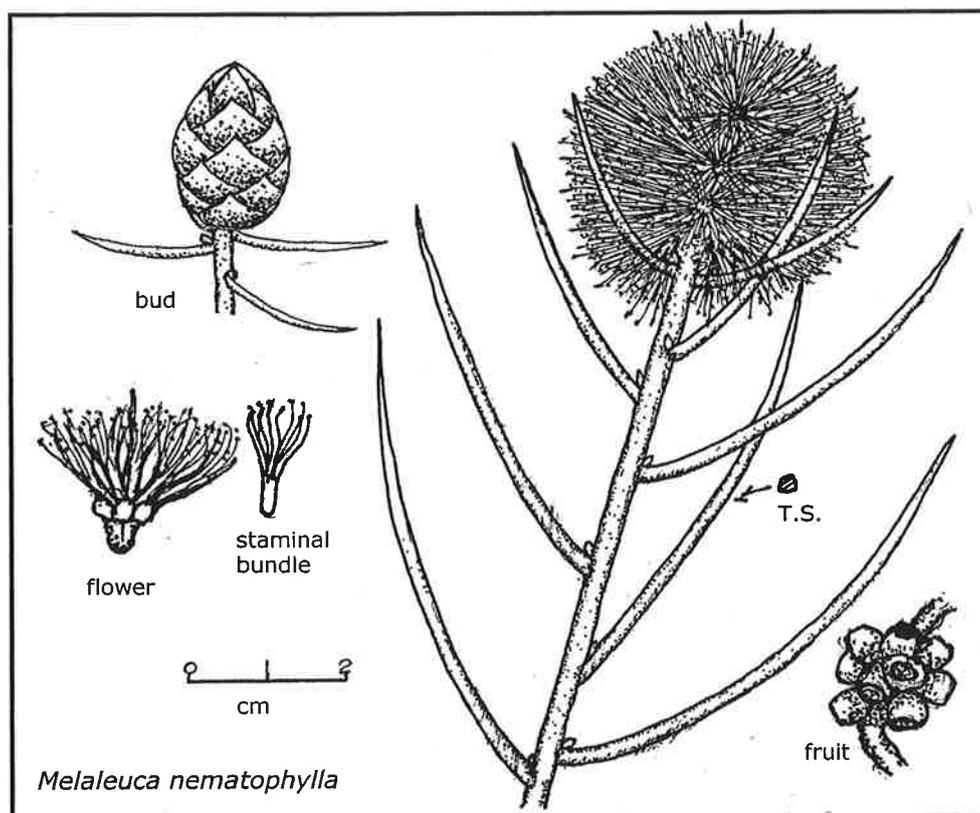
Journal

Melaleucas nematophylla & filifolia

Ivan Holliday

I know that I am the initial culprit for misleading readers by naming *M. nematophylla* as *M. filifolia* in the first edition of a *Field Guide to Melaleucas* (since corrected in Vol. 2). But this was the information I received from the WA Herbarium at that time.

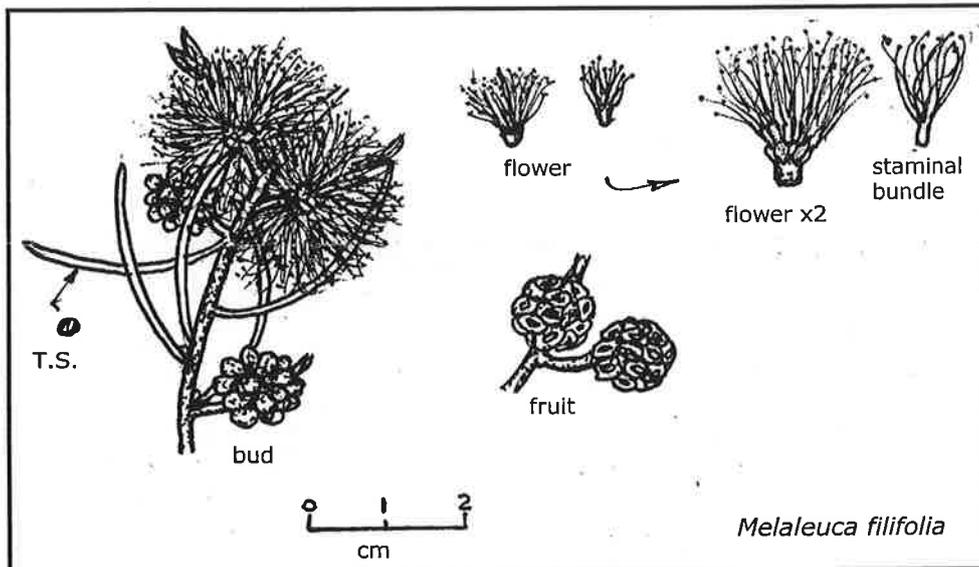
To clear up this mistake once and for all, I have prepared the following which demonstrates how very different these two species are.



M. nematophylla - which many of us are growing in our gardens and is frequently on sale at our plant sales (sometimes labeled as *M. filifolia*) - is a large, upright shrub to 4m high or more, if left unpruned, featuring profuse, terminal, globular heads of bright pink, to paler pink, flowers 4cm or more in

diameter. Leaves are terete, smooth, mostly up-curving, 4-12cm long. Fruits are irregularly arranged in peg-like clusters.

M. filifolia is a much smaller, spreading shrub to about 1m high, with bright pink, globular heads of flowers 2-2.5cm across. These are terminal but almost always arranged on a short side branchlet of about 5cm in length. The globular heads of buds are greenish-yellow and always seem present in numbers matching the flowers. Leaves are mainly 1.5-4cm long, many curving upwards in similar fashion to those of *M. nematophylla*. The fruits are distinctly soccerball-like clusters about 1cm across.



Both species inhabit the Kalbarri-Mullewa districts, with *M. nematophylla* ranging further.

Note: *M. boeophylla* from the northern Kalbarri area is so similar to *M. filifolia* at a glance, that one could be confused, if observing this species. It differs in its much shorter, more flattened leaves (transversely semi-elliptic to semi-oblong), 0.6-1cm long, and generally longer calyx lobes. Both species have consistently 5 calyx lobes.

Germination test on CALLISTEMON 13/03/2001 (D.a.s. =Days after sowing)

	Species	Num. Of seed	Germination percentage							
			D.a.s.: 6 19/03/01	D.a.s.: 8 21/03/01	D.a.s.: 10 23/03/01	D.a.s.: 13 26/03/01	D.a.s.: 15 28/03/01	D.a.s.: 17 30/03/01	D.a.s.: 20 02/04/01	D.a.s.: 22 04/04/01
1	<i>C. Citrinus</i>	50	4,0%	4,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%
2	<i>C. Comboyensis</i>	68	7,3%	11,8%	11,8%	13,2%	13,2%	13,2%	13,2%	13,2%
3	<i>C. Formosus</i>	56	3,6%	3,6%	12,5%	12,5%	12,5%	12,5%	12,5%	12,5%
4	<i>C. Glaucus</i>	68	1,5%	2,9%	4,4%	4,4%	4,4%	4,4%	5,9%	5,9%
5	<i>C. Injune Pink</i>	50	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%
6	<i>C. Jeffersii (Violaceus)</i>	60	1,6%	1,6%	1,6%	1,6%	1,6%	1,6%	1,6%	1,6%
7	<i>C. Linearifolius</i>	50	0,0%	0,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%	2,0%
8	<i>C. Montanus</i>	50	6,0%	28,0%	30,0%	34,0%	36,0%	36,0%	36,0%	36,0%
9	<i>C. Pallidus</i>	50	0,0%	0,0%	4,0%	8,0%	10,0%	10,0%	10,0%	10,0%
10	<i>C. Paludosus</i>	50	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%
11	<i>C. Phoenicerus</i>	50	12,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%
12	<i>C. Pinifolius</i>	50	18,0%	26,0%	26,0%	26,0%	26,0%	26,0%	26,0%	26,0%
13	<i>C. Pinifolius Red</i>	50	0,0%	12,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	24,0%
14	<i>C. Pityoides</i>	50	10,0%	18,0%	20,0%	20,0%	20,0%	20,0%	20,0%	20,0%
15	<i>C. Polandii</i>	50	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	2,0%	2,0%	4,0%	4,0%	4,0%
16	<i>C. Rigidus</i>	50	0,0%	6,0%	12,0%	12,0%	14,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%
17	<i>C. Rugulosus</i>	50	0,0%	0,0%	14,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	22,0%	24,0%
18	<i>C. Salignus</i>	50	2,0%	4,0%	6,0%	12,0%	12,0%	12,0%	14,0%	14,0%
19	<i>C. Salignus Rubra</i>	50	0,0%	2,0%	4,0%	4,0%	6,0%	10,0%	10,0%	12,0%
20	<i>C. Sieberi</i>	50	12,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%	16,0%
21	<i>C. Teretifolius</i>	50	10,0%	22,0%	28,0%	28,0%	28,0%	28,0%	28,0%	30,0%
22	<i>C. Viminalis</i>	50	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%	6,0%
23	<i>C. Viridiflorus</i>	50	14,0%	14,0%	14,0%	14,0%	14,0%	14,0%	14,0%	14,0%

Germination test on CALLISTEMON after an OSMOPRIMING treatment - 06/04/2001 (Das = days after sowing)

	Species	Num. Of seeds	germination percentage							
			Das: 4 10/04/2001	Das: 6 12/04/2001	Das: 8 14/04/2001	Das: 10 16/04/2001	Das: 12 18/04/2001	Das: 14 20/04/2001		
1	<i>C. Citrinus</i>	100	5%	6%	10%	10%	10%	10%		
2	<i>C. Comboyensis</i>	100	3%	4%	4%	4%	5%	5%		
3	<i>C. Formosus</i>	100	5%	7%	14%	14%	17%	17%		
4	<i>C. Glaucus</i>	100	1%	2%	4%	6%	8%	9%		
5	<i>C. Injune Pink</i>	100	13%	15%	15%	15%	15%	15%		
6	<i>C. Jeffersii (Violaceus)</i>	100	0%	0%	1%	1%	2%	2%		
7	<i>C. Linearifolius</i>	100	0%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%		
8	<i>C. Montanus</i>	100	3%	16%	18%	19%	22%	22%		
9	<i>C. Pallidus</i>	100	0%	4%	9%	9%	13%	15%		
10	<i>C. Paludosus</i>	100	4%	13%	14%	14%	14%	14%		
11	<i>C. Phoenicerus</i>	100	3%	10%	18%	18%	21%	22%		
12	<i>C. Pinifolius</i>	100	2%	10%	20%	20%	20%	20%		
13	<i>C. Pinifolius Red</i>	100	3%	6%	8%	14%	17%	17%		
14	<i>C. Pityoides</i>	100	3%	10%	16%	16%	18%	20%		
15	<i>C. Polandii</i>	100	1%	3%	3%	3%	3%	3%		
16	<i>C. Rigidus</i>	100	1%	4%	4%	5%	6%	6%		
17	<i>C. Rugulosus</i>	100	2%	2%	3%	8%	10%	11%		
18	<i>C. Salignus</i>	100	2%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%		
19	<i>C. Salignus Rubra</i>	100	0%	1%	2%	3%	6%	6%		
20	<i>C. Sieberi</i>	100	4%	6%	7%	10%	10%	10%		
21	<i>C. Teretifolius</i>	100	4%	10%	15%	17%	18%	20%		
22	<i>C. Viminalis</i>	100	1%	4%	7%	7%	7%	7%		
23	<i>C. Viridiflorus</i>	100	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%		